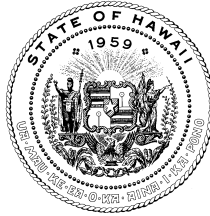


DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

ENGINEERING DIVISION  
POST OFFICE BOX 373  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Nov 9, 2021

SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA  
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

TO: Suzanne D. Case, Chairperson

THROUGH: David G. Smith, Forestry and Wildlife Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "DGS", is written next to the name David G. Smith.

FROM: Carty S. Chang, Chief Engineer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "CSC", is written next to the name Carty S. Chang.

SUBJECT: Approval of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) and Approval for the Issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the West Kaua'i Field Operations Facility, Hanapēpē, Kaua'i, Hawai'i

**BACKGROUND:**

The State of Hawai'i, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) is proposing to construct a new Field Operations base yard located in Hanapēpē on the Island of Kaua'i. The proposed project will be located on an existing State-owned parcel off of Lele Road and is identified as Tax Map Key (TMK): (4) 1-8-008: 020. The proposed project site consists of a 10-acre portion of parcel 020 which is currently vacant but was once cultivated for sugar cane.

There are no DLNR facilities on the west side of Kaua'i that can support daily operations and responses to emergencies for the western half of Kaua'i, which includes Kōke'e, Waimea Canyon, and Polihale State Park. Currently, DLNR support for West Kaua'i is based out of Līhu'e, which incurs lengthy daily commute time, added labor, and avoidable fuel consumption for the following DLNR divisions:

- Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR)
- Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE)
- Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW)
- Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DOBOR)
- Division of State Parks (SP)
- State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD)
- Engineering Division (ENG)
- Land Division (LD)

Providing a staging area for personnel and equipment at a facility on the west side will significantly improve response times to emergencies, minimizing wildfire damage, result in a reduced volume of fire suppression, quicker enforcement action, and improved monitoring in managing public safety. The proposed facility will also serve as a temporary shelter for DLNR

24/7 emergency crews and would provide a logistical location for refueling of equipment, restocking of supplies, and reducing driver fatigue.

When completed, the new facility will provide DLNR divisions with the infrastructure to enhance and support current programs, extend public outreach and service, and provide additional facilities for emergency situations.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION:

The project site is located on the south side of the island of Kaua'i in Hanapēpē, Waimea. The project site is located on a larger state-owned parcel [TMK (4) 1-8-008: 020] that is currently leased out to a private organization for agricultural use. In 2014, the State of Hawaii Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) approved a DLNR request to set aside approximately ten (10) acres of the parcel to provide an area to construct a West Kaua'i Field Operations Facility. The site is immediately bordered by Hanapēpē Park to the north, Lele Road to the east, Kaua'i Veterans Cemetery to the south, and open agricultural land to the west.

The site extends approximately 600 feet parallel to the western edge of Lele Road and approximately 730 feet west from the edge of the road. The site is part of a fallow sugar cane field. There is a gate and road entering the site at approximately the midpoint of the site boundary on Lele Road, but the road beyond the gate is overgrown by weeds and no longer distinguishable at ground level.

With no field operation facility on the west side of Kaua'i, the Department is seeking to provide a base for efficient and economical response to emergency incidents, as well as daily management operations. The proposed facility will shorten the response time to emergencies and activities such as wildfire suppression, thereby reducing the overall costs. Approximately 38 DLNR employees are anticipated to be at the site daily and approximately 140 other DLNR employees are anticipated to utilize the site on a periodic or emergency basis. The site will be in operations typically during normal business hours but also used in emergency situations on a 24-hour basis.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

A master plan was prepared for the facility in 2016 by INK Architects. The proposed facility will include office space for DLNR staff, a conference room, restrooms, showers, secured storage space for confiscated items, parking, and fueling facilities. A nursery to raise endangered plants and a pen for endangered geese will also be located on-site. A single driveway off of Lele Road will lead to an access roadway that circumnavigates the proposed buildings. Stormwater will be kept on the property in a landscaped detention pond adjacent to Lele Road. The site layout was designed to strategically place buildings on the site based on its functionality. Public buildings will be located closer to the main road and private buildings will be located towards the back of the site. Animal pens will be in the corner so that winds will blow the odor away from the site and not affect the other buildings. A continuous 8-foot high chain link fence with barbed wire top will surround the entire property as a requirement to secure the perimeter. Additionally, continuous cattle fencing is also required to keep out livestock in the area. The cattle fencing will be the outer fence and the chain link security fence will be the inner fence to keep out trespassers.

In general, there will be three different types of buildings:

- **Office/Workspace Buildings:** The office/workspace buildings will be located near the site entrance. The main intent is to create an accessible location where the public can visit and pick up permits or view records.
- **Utilitarian Buildings:** These consist of storage and workshop buildings – storage is considered a private building. The workshops are open-air buildings that allow workers to repair their equipment and vehicles.
- **Lab Buildings:** Labs will be for DOBOR, SHPD, and DOFAW

The facility will also contain the following functional areas:

- Base yard and outdoor work areas
- Emergency services command center capabilities (base operations)
- Offices/training and conference/research
- Parking for personally owned vehicles (POV) and DLNR vehicles, such as boats/boat trailers, ATV trailers, construction equipment, and trailers, flatbed trucks, construction vehicles, and other vehicles
- Public service and outreach
- Storage for evidence, materials, equipment, tools, records, archival

Additional facility considerations include:

- Multipurpose building with a large meeting area
- Shared office building
- Public outreach – permit issuance, meetings, classes
- Emergency services – basecamp/headquarters during operations
- Shared workshop and maintenance building consisting of vehicle washdown facilities and areas for vehicle/equipment maintenance. Typically only wash down and light vehicle maintenance would be conducted at this base yard.

The proposed uses for each DLNR division and how they expect to use the base yard are as follows:

- **DAR:** support the hatch/raise/release aquatic resource program; storage for signs, traps, and other necessary materials for the protection of native and resident aquatic species and their habitats.
- **DOCARE:** serve as logistical staging facility, briefing room, and central operation for enforcement activity for land and sea undertakings; storage of criminal evidence material and firearms; staging for patrol vessels, jet skis, and equipment to hasten response times for enforcement of land and ocean activities on the west side, south and north shores of Kaua'i, and Ni'ihau.
- **DOFAW:** storage of supply and materials, heavy maintenance equipment, fire fighting vehicles and equipment; maintenance and refueling area for vehicles used to manage State-owned forests such as the Kōke'e Forest Reserve; location of a new plant nursery for endangered species and the protection of the ecosystem through replanting after fires to mitigate soil erosion; location for a pen for endangered animal recovery, including support of the Nēnē Goose protection program.

- **DOBOR:** office for public permitting that better serves the West Kauaʻi community; colocation with enforcement division, storage of impounded ocean recreational vehicles.
- **LD:** storage of signs, sign posts, and other materials to better manage State-owned lands.
- **SP:** office space for staff who serve the parks on the west side of Kauaʻi; material storage, maintenance, landscaping, and facilities repair.
- **ENG:** storage of material and equipment for Dam Control and Rockfall Inspection Programs.
- **SHPD:** office space and storage for files and artifact findings. SHPD currently does not have an office or storage facility in Kauaʻi.
- Other DLNR divisions may also have use of the site in the future.

## ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Under the No Action Alternative, the parcel would remain in its existing condition. Development of the DLNR facility would not occur and no site disturbance or construction impacts would occur. Residents and visitors would not benefit from the proximity to permit application administration, wildfire suppression, and emergency assistance for the south and west-side of Kauaʻi. The closest facility providing these functions would be in Lihue, 18 miles to the east. The No Action Alternative is included in environmental analyses as a baseline condition for comparison to other alternatives.

Alternate locations for the DLNR Facility were considered and dismissed. Presently, there is no DLNR facility on the west side of Kauaʻi that can provide a base for efficient and economical response to emergency incidents as well as daily management operations or activities. Personnel, equipment, and supplies need to travel 50 miles and two (2) hours to respond to any incident on the west side of the island. The current site is at an optimal location because of its proximity to harbor, airport, and boat launching facilities. The proposed project location will significantly reduce response times and improve public service.

The Draft Environmental Assessment has been published by the State of Hawaiʻi, Department of Health, Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC), in the March 8, 2021 bulletin and is posted on the OEQC website at: [http://oeqc2.doh.hawaii.gov/Doc\\_Library/2021-03-08-KA-DEA-West-Kauai-Field-Operations-Facility.pdf](http://oeqc2.doh.hawaii.gov/Doc_Library/2021-03-08-KA-DEA-West-Kauai-Field-Operations-Facility.pdf)

The Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) is available on SharePoint through the following link for your information: [https://hawaiioint-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/dani\\_yoo\\_hawaii\\_gov/ErMI8EzOgWIEgJn6DZ-zCEAB0542DStGZDc8gaNEaJWzeA?e=iaWuEm](https://hawaiioint-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/dani_yoo_hawaii_gov/ErMI8EzOgWIEgJn6DZ-zCEAB0542DStGZDc8gaNEaJWzeA?e=iaWuEm)

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Project:	West Kaua'i Field Operations Facility
Agency:	Department of Land and Natural Resources Engineering Division 1151 Punchbowl Street, Room 221 Honolulu, HI 96813
Consultant:	SSFM International, Inc. 501 Sumner Street, Suite 620 Honolulu, HI 96817 Contact: Jared Chang, AICP Email: <a href="mailto:jchang@ssfm.com">jchang@ssfm.com</a> Phone: (808) 356-1242
Tax Map Key(s):	(4) 1-8-008: 020 (por.)
Proposed Action:	The State of Hawai'i, Department of Land and Natural Resources is proposing to construct a new field operations base yard for efficient and economical response to emergency incidents, as well as daily management operations. The proposed facility will include office space, a conference room, restrooms, showers, secured storage space for confiscated items, parking, fueling facilities, and a nursery to raise endangered plants, and a pen for endangered geese. Due to funding availability, the project will be completed in phases.
Land Area:	10 acres
State Land Use District:	Agricultural, Urban
Existing Land Use:	Fallow agricultural lands, undeveloped
Present Zoning:	Open
Special Management Area:	Not Within SMA
Permits That May be Required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Form 7460-1 Notice of Proposed Construction or alteration pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 14, Part 77.9</li> <li>• Department of Planning - Use Permit</li> <li>• Department of Planning - Zoning Permit</li> <li>• Department of Health National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), permits for construction activities and storm water discharge</li> <li>• Department of Public Works - Grading Permit</li> <li>• Building Division - Building Permit</li> <li>• Department of Water – Application for Water Service</li> </ul>

## FINDINGS AND REASONS SUPPORTING RECOMMENDED DETERMINATION:

Hawai'i Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 200.1, Section 13, outlines those factors agencies must consider when determining whether an action has significant effects. Significance criteria evaluation of the proposed project indicates that there will be no significant adverse effects to the environment. The factors are discussed below.

1. *Will the proposed project involve an irrevocable commitment or loss or destruction of any natural or cultural resources?*

The proposed action will develop agricultural lands which are currently not being used for agriculture and have been reduced in value as agricultural or natural resources as a result of military and commercial use. The biological survey conducted for the project determined that the habitat is highly degraded and consists primarily of a variety of non-native plant species. Because of previous disturbance to the property, the flora and fauna communities on the property are comprised of non-native birds and plants. Therefore, the use of the subject property for a DLNR Field Operations Facility does not represent an irrevocable commitment to loss or destruction of any natural flora or faunal resources

The historic sites present on the property survey are degraded 20th-century military and agricultural remnants. Data recovery has been conducted through the completion of an Archeological Inventory Survey (AIS). No impacts to cultural resources or practices are expected as the site is not associated with ongoing cultural practices and does not possess any unique resources to support such activities. Therefore, the proposed project does not represent an irrevocable commitment to loss or destruction of any cultural or archeological resource.

2. *Will the proposed project curtail the range of beneficial uses of the environment?*

The proposed project will not curtail the range of potential beneficial uses of the subject parcel or the surrounding environment. The DLNR Field Operations Facility will provide benefits to the community through improved coordination for coastal recreational planning and management by improving field operations in west and south-west Kaua'i through increased support for daily operations and responses to emergencies for the western half of Kaua'i, including Kōke'e, Waimea Canyon and Polihale State Park. The project will result in a minimal loss of beneficial agricultural uses of the environment because the property is currently vacant, highly degraded, and not being used for agriculture.

3. *Will the proposed project conflict with the State's long-term environmental policies?*

The proposed project is consistent with the State's policies, goals, and guidelines established in Chapter 344, HRS. The project site has been heavily impacted by grading activities through military and commercial uses. The proposed DLNR Field Operations Facility is consistent with the goals of HRS Chapter 344-3 (1): "Conserve the natural resources, so that land, water, mineral, visual, air and other natural resources are protected by controlling pollution, by preserving or augmenting natural resources, and by safeguarding the State's unique natural environmental characteristics in a manner which will foster and promote the

general welfare, create and maintain conditions under which humanity and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of the people of Hawai'i."

4. *Will the proposed project substantially affect the economic or social welfare of the community or State?*

The subject property is currently unutilized. In the long-term, the proposed action will have a beneficial economic and social welfare impact through improved coordination for coastal recreational planning and management and improved field operations in west and south-west Kaua'i. Residents and visitors will benefit from increased support for daily operations and responses to emergencies for the western half of Kaua'i. No impact on cultural practices is anticipated as the subject property is not associated with ongoing cultural activities and no archaeological sites are known to be present on the property.

5. *Will the proposed project substantially affect public health in any detrimental way?*

The proposed action is not anticipated to have any environmental impacts that would affect public health. No hazardous materials will be used during construction, and construction impacts to water and air quality will be minimized through the implementation of best management practices. Vehicle emissions will increase slightly over current levels resulting from the transport of staff, however, the slight increase in vehicle emission resulting from the proposed project is not expected to cause a significant impact on air quality in the project vicinity.

6. *Will the proposed project involve substantial secondary impacts, such as population changes or effects on public facilities?*

In the long-term, the proposed action will have beneficial economic and social welfare impacts through improved coordination for coastal recreational planning and management and improved field operations in west and south-west Kaua'i. Residents and visitors will benefit from increased support for daily operations and responses to emergencies for the western half of Kaua'i.

7. *Will the proposed project involve a substantial degradation of environmental quality?*

The proposed action is not expected to cause substantial degradation of environmental quality. No hazardous materials will be used during construction, and construction impacts to water and air quality will be minimized through the implementation of best management practices. No significant long-term adverse impacts are anticipated from the proposed project.

8. *Is the proposed project one which is individually limited but cumulatively may have considerable effect upon the environment or involves a commitment for larger actions?*

Cumulative positive effects from the project will include long-term increased support for daily conservation operations and responses to wildfires and emergencies for the western half of Kaua'i.

9. *Will the proposed project substantially affect any rare, threatened or endangered species of flora or fauna or habitat?*

Because of previous disturbance to the property, the flora and fauna communities on the property are comprised of non-native birds and plants. No rare, threatened, or endangered species inhabit the subject property, nor does the site provide a unique or exceptional habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species.

10. *Will the proposed project detrimentally affect air or water quality or ambient noise levels?*

No significant impact to air or water quality or ambient noise levels are anticipated to result from the proposed action. Short-term impacts during construction of facilities will be minimized through the implementation of best management practices to control construction dust and emissions in compliance with provisions of HAR Section 11.60.1-33. All work will be in conformance with the air pollution standards and regulations of the State Department of Health (DOH).

Long term impacts to air quality from the proposed project are expected to be minimal. Vehicle emissions will increase slightly over current levels resulting from the transport of staff and visitors to the property. The slight increase in vehicle emission resulting for the proposed project is not expected to cause a significant impact to air quality in the project vicinity.

11. *Does the project affect nor would it likely to be damaged as a result of being located in environmentally sensitive area such as a flood plain, tsunami zone, erosion-prone area, geologically hazardous land, estuary, fresh water, or coastal area?*

The subject property is not located in an environmentally sensitive area such as a flood plain, tsunami zone, beach, erosion-prone area, geologically hazardous land, estuary, freshwater, or coastal waters.

12. *Will the project substantially affect scenic vistas and viewplanes identified in county or state plans or studies?*

The project is not anticipated to have a significant negative impact on scenic vistas or scenic resources in the vicinity of Hanapēpē or Port Allen. The project structures will not be visible from Kaumuali'i Highway which is the major thoroughfare through the area. The project will be visible when traveling in either direction along Lele Road which connects the highway with the Port Allen Airport, but will not obstruct mauka or makai views from the road.



13. *Will the project require substantial energy consumption?*

Construction of the project will not require substantial energy consumption relative to other similar projects. After the project is completed, energy will be conserved by using modern energy-efficient appliances and fixtures, and application of green design concepts.

For the reasons above, it is anticipated that the proposed project will not have any significant effect in the context of Chapter 343, Hawaiʻi Revised Statutes, and Hawaiʻi Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 200.1, Section 13.

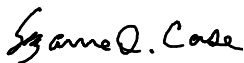
RECOMMENDATION:

In accordance with the Board of Land & Natural Resources approval on July 9, 2021, of Item L-1, authority was delegated to the Chairperson to approve an Environmental Assessment and Issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI):

1. Approve the FEA for the West Kauaʻi Field Operations Facility, Hanapēpē, Kauaʻi, Hawaiʻi.
2. Issue of a FONSI for the proposed project. Based on the review of the FEA and the comments received during the 30-day period in addition to SSFM International, Inc. responses, find that the project will not have a significant effect on the environmental and cultural resources of the area.

☒ Approved

☐ Disapproved



SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson